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ISRAEL AMONG THE NATIONS¹

The time has long passed since any historian could regard Israel as living in isolation from the tumultuous life of the Orient. It is now generally recognized that Israel's life was a part of and inextricably interwoven with that of the great Semitic family to which she belonged. Her history can be understood, therefore, only as it is interpreted against the background of the ambitions and attainments, the thoughts and feelings of the Semitic world.

While this relationship between Israel and her neighbors has thus been realized, there has thus far been no presentation of Hebrew history that has given adequate consideration to it. The title of the book under review promises just the thing that is needed, but the promise is not fulfilled. It is one thing to give a sketch of the political and military relations of a people with its neighbors; it is quite another to trace the "development" of that people "within the framework of world-history." The former task is that undertaken here. The accomplishment of the latter task involves a broader and deeper conception of history than that apparently entertained by Lehmann-Haupt. History is not a mere record of events. Much less is it a list of campaigns, or of successive dynasties. It is rather a setting forth of the entire complex of the interests which make up the life of a people. History is the record of the interrelations and convolutions of the various forces and life-processes that contribute to the development of a nation. It concerns itself to be sure with such concrete and tangible things as dates, wars, treaties, tribute, and changes of dynasties; but it is, to say the least, equally concerned with the less tangible but no less real things of the spirit. By these things does a nation live. The external, objective phenomena are but as the tossing waves on the bosom of the mighty ocean. The navigator must know the depths of the great deep. The outstanding feature of the history of Israel, for example, was not her political activity, nor her military triumphs and defeats, but the development of her intellectual and religious life. The task awaiting the historian of Israel is to discover and trace the interrelations of Israel with the Semitic world along the lines of commerce, art, literature, learning, and religion. A constant interchange in such commodities as these was in progress. It still remains to determine the debit and credit sides in this account between Israel and the nations. It is not enough to have added a *Kulturgeschichtliche Rückschau und Nachlese*

¹ *Israel: Seine Entwicklung im Rahmen der Weltgeschichte.* Von C. F. Lehmann-Haupt. Tübingen: Mohr, 1911. vii+344 pages. M. 10.

as a sort of an afterthought. The next great history of Israel will be the one that takes into full and fair consideration all of these elements and shows how Israel came up from among the nations to be not indeed *sui generis* but certainly *primus inter pares*.

Professor Lehmann-Haupt possesses many of the qualities requisite to the performance of the aforesaid task in an eminent degree. His range of information is unusually wide and accurate. His enthusiasm for detailed investigation is contagious. His judgment is on the whole excellent. He has direct access to a large area of information through his acquaintance with the various Semitic tongues. His self-restraint in the presence of facts is praiseworthy. Within the limits of the task as conceived by himself he has done an admirable piece of work. He is in a certain sense a pioneer in this field, and deserves full credit for his courage and skill. Particularly valuable is the way in which he has constantly reckoned with the outlying non-Semitic peoples whose pressure upon the Semitic world from time to time caused more or less significant changes within the limits of that world. Where there is so much to praise, it is almost ungracious to express dissent. But some questions must be raised in the interests of truth.

The influence of Egypt upon Palestine seems unduly minimized and that of Babylonia correspondingly magnified. For example, such a statement as that Palestine from 2600 B.C. or earlier until about 1600 B.C. was under the practically unbroken dominion of Babylonian politics and culture (pp. 15, 243) is hardly defensible. The facts are against it. To say nothing of mining operations in Sinai and voyages to Phoenicia and the Lebanon region prior to 2600 B.C., Pepi I sent five expeditions to Palestine (2590-2570 B.C.); Pepi II carried on commerce with the Lebanons; Amenemhet I was in constant touch with Syria (2000-1970 B.C.), and Sesostri III (1887-1849 B.C.) campaigned in Syria and welcomed Syrian traders in Egypt. Furthermore, the excavations in Palestine show practically no traces of Babylonian influence in the earlier period; but, on the contrary, constantly reflect the art and customs of Egypt, the next-door neighbor on the south. The altogether convincing evidence of the Palestinian excavations is practically overlooked by our author. In like manner, undue stress is laid upon the fact that cuneiform was used in the official correspondence of Palestine and Egypt as witnessed by the Tel-el-Amarna letters. But cuneiform was not confined to the Babylonians, having been used also by the Hittites and the people of Mitanni, from whom it may easily have been transmitted to Syria and Palestine. In any case, the mere use of a

foreign language for diplomatic and commercial intercourse between nations is not in and of itself indicative of any predominating influence on the part of the people to whom that language belongs.

Coming to the internal affairs of Israel herself, the supposition that Rehoboam gained many victories over Jeroboam which are not on record (p. 71) is exceedingly improbable in a history, one of whose characteristics it is to magnify Judah at the expense of the Northern Kingdom. The Hebrew name Ben-hadad, as has been shown by Dr. D. D. Luckenbill in *AJSL*, XXVII, 267 ff., is to be retained as correct and not changed (p. 77) into Bir-Hadar (Assyrian, *Bir'idri*), which is better read Hadadezer (= Assyrian, *Adad-'idri*). The phrase "Jehus Sohn Ahab" (p. 73) is surely a printer's error. The attempt to place the prophet Hosea in the reign of King Hoshea rather than in the days prior to 734 B.C. can hardly be called successful. The language of Hos. 12:12, 15 certainly does not warrant interpretation as of the invasion of Tiglath-pileser in 734 B.C. and the silence regarding this event and its consequences is not so easily harmonized with the supposition that the prophet spoke after its occurrence as our author seems to think. Nor was the political situation of Menahem's time such as to render improbable the existence of pro-Assyrian and pro-Egyptian parties in Israel as was the case in the prophet Hosea's days. Even though the source of danger in Menahem's reign was Urartu, yet some might easily have turned toward Egypt for relief while others looked in the opposite direction toward Assyria. Again, in the case of Nahum the prophet, there is no real basis for the view that he was one of the exiles of the Northern Kingdom. His interest is not in the north nor is his knowledge of Assyrian places and things so minute and specific as to make his residence in Assyria an imperative conclusion. Still another prophet receives unusual treatment at the hands of our author. Ezekiel's visions or trances are explained as due to his having been subject to epileptic attacks. This is sheer hypothesis and furnishes no real help at that. The visions are not of such a character as to find elucidation in such ways. They are too evidently the result of a fertile and exuberant literary imagination.

One more thing must be mentioned, viz., the author's confidence in the historical value of the Chronicler's work. It is, of course, obvious that the Chronicler is not to be condemned off-hand, thrown out of court without fair trial. But on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that in many cases, where it is possible to test the Chronicler by comparison with other sources he stands condemned of misrepres-

sensation and deliberate invention. This renders it very unwise to place much credence in the Chronicler's unsupported statements on any subject. He is chiefly of value as reflecting the ideals, thoughts, and methods of his own day. Nor has the discovery of the Papyri from Assuan and Elephantine done as much for the Chronicler's reputation as Dr. Lehmann-Haupt would have us believe (p. iv). It is no more easy to accept the "decrees" of the Chronicler's narrative now than it was before the recent discoveries. They remain just as thoroughly Jewish documents as they ever were. Nor is there anything in the new Papyri that in any degree forces the originality of these "decrees" upon us. Indeed, a comparison of the Aramaic of the "decrees" with that of the Papyri points to a much later origin for the former as Professor Torrey has so clearly pointed out in his *Ezra Studies* (1910).

But, passing by these and other questions over which differences of opinion must arise, there remains a deal of sound learning and reliable information in Dr. Lehmann-Haupt's book. He has brought together things that have too long remained apart. He opens up many new vistas and deserves the gratitude of students everywhere for marking out a new path.

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A NEW COMMENTARY ON HABAKKUK

The Book of Habakkuk presents a degree of difficulty to the interpreter out of all proportion to its size. A great amount of literature called forth by the desire to solve its problems stands to its credit both in English and in German. A wide diversity of expedients has been employed in these efforts after a solution. Some insist upon the essential unity of the book; others analyze it into almost infinitesimal portions (so e.g. Marti and Nicolardot). Its date is located all the way from the days of Jeremiah to the Maccabaeon period. The author of this latest commentary¹ has studied the work of all his predecessors carefully and is completely satisfied with none of them. He therefore undertakes to present a new attempt to solve the riddle of Habakkuk. His attempt comes well accredited, having been awarded the Senior Kenicott scholarship in the University of Oxford in 1909, when it was first written.

The most important part of this commentary is the full and critical

¹ *The Book of Habakkuk*. Introduction, Translation, and Notes on the Hebrew Text. By G. G. V. Stonehouse. London: Rivingtons, 1911. 264 pages. 5s net.